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DUNCAN DAVISON AND CO.

Lieder ohne Worte. For the Pianoforte. By Edward Sharp.

WE are glad to see a composer honestly coming forward with his "*Lieder ohne Worte*" under the title invented by Mendelssohn, instead of endeavouring to escape the charge of imitation by christening his pieces with fantastic names which might often be transferred from one to the other without anybody but the author discovering it. Mr. Sharp's "*Lieder*" rest on their musical merit alone; and we are bound to say that they are written throughout with fluency and skill. That they bear somewhat too much the air of clever extempore playing can scarcely be questioned; but if this be the style of the composer, by all means let us have it, and concentration of thought and clearness of design may come by experience. At all events Mr. Sharp's compositions are free and spontaneous; neither marred by extraordinary complications of singular harmony, nor cramped by an undue straining after that unfortunate "originality," which is so obviously the result of real hard work. Of the five pieces contained in this book, we prefer No. 1,—which is graceful and flowing throughout; No. 3, in $1\frac{2}{4}$ rhythm, with an elegant melody, which must be carefully practised before it can be sung, as the composer intends,—and No. 4, which, although rather long, is one of the most musicianlike of the set. The pieces can only be attempted by advanced players; many of the *arpeggios* requiring extensions which are difficult to manage where it is indispensable that the melody should flow on uninterruptedly.

The Cambrian Plume. Song, with Chorus *ad lib.* Words by Henry Davies. Music by Brinley Richards.

WE can scarcely say that we much affect patriotic songs; but as the many are not of our opinion, it is well that at least they should be written and composed by poets and musicians. In the present case this union has been successfully effected; and the result is a very excellent song, which will doubtless make its way to a world-wide popularity. The theme is vigorous; and the harmonies, although simple, are carefully written, and give a colour to the melody, without interfering with the boldness which should characterise compositions of this class. The chorus at the end of each verse is exceedingly effective.

The Savoyard's Return. Song. Words by Kirke White. Music by John Jackson.

MR. JACKSON has written a flowing and appropriate melody to Kirke White's poetry; and if the accompaniment is in parts somewhat laboured, it at least shows care and knowledge of the treatment of chords. The modulations are well conducted throughout; and the return to the original subject is judiciously managed. We are particularly pleased with the sustained ninth on the dominant in the final phrase, which is happily expressive of the words.

F. PITMAN.

Juvenile Songs. Set to Music by T. Crampton.

WE recollect once hearing of a benevolent individual who, seeing some children dragging along a piece of wood cut into the conventional form of a toy-horse, kindly attached a real horse's tail to it, and was surprised to find that he had marred the children's pleasure for the day. This incident may be accepted as typical of the child-mind. The first toy is the first love; and it is no act of generosity to attempt to bring the realities of our practical world into so pure and confiding a state of existence as we pass through in our happy juvenile days. As it is with nursery toys, so it is with nursery poetry. Be it bad or good, no child would have a line of it tampered with. There is, perhaps, no particular reason why "Little Jack Horner" should consider himself a "good boy" because he put his thumb into a pie, and pulled out a plum—indeed, we should say that the balance of public opinion would be rather against such an assumption—but he has

had it all his own way for we know not how many hundred years, and who shall now attempt to dispute it? Again, pedantic poets might object to the story of old Mother Hubbard's journey to the cupboard being told to children in verses with such atrociously bad rhymes as "bone" and "none;" but Mother Hubbard is a nursery classic; and woe to the person who attempts to touch up the legend to accord with the "intellect of the age." It is because no such desecration as this is attempted in the volume before us, that we are inclined to award unqualified praise to the promoters of the undertaking. The nursery rhymes (usually remarkable for brevity) have been lengthened out by original verses so admirably as to render it almost impossible, without previous acquaintance with them, to know where the modern additions commence. This task has been entrusted to Messrs. George Bennett, "Roland Quiz" and J. B. Keene. The music is just as simple as it should be; and in most cases is happily characteristic of the words. Some of the tunes are exceedingly pleasing, and in all a tender regard has been shown for the limited compass of the little voices for which they are expressly designed. We are especially pleased with "The little Chinaman"—a graceful air in $\frac{3}{4}$ rhythm—"The merry Birds"—a very pretty, tripping melody—and "The Clock"—in which the monotonous "tick" is well expressed. The harmonies are generally exceedingly pure; but we must take objection to the dominant seventh in the third bar of "The Froggie's Ball," which is an awkward bass to the melody, and is not improved by leaping up to the key note in the next bar. In the interest of the book, too, it is well to call attention to the close on the dominant in "The Jolly Miller," where octave A's are printed in the bass instead of G's. It will be seen, however, that any objections that we may urge against the musical portion of the volume are few and far between. Children will be delighted with this graceful little offering to their *repertoire* of nursery music; and their silent gratitude will be more valuable to the authors of the book than any public praise which may be awarded to them by grown-up critics.

J. READING AND CO., SYDNEY.

I've waited and watched. Ballad; from the Cantata, "Under the Holly." Words by Robt. P. Whitworth. Composed by James C. Fisher.

IT is scarcely fair perhaps to judge of a Cantata by one of the ballads which it contains; but we may say that, without presenting anything strikingly original, there is a boldness about the style of Mr. Fisher which is hopeful in the extreme. The melody of the song before us is well adapted to the words; and there are some harmonies (the end of the 6th and commencement of the 7th bar, for instance) which show a laudable desire to escape from mere common-place. Mr. Fisher seems so thoroughly in earnest that we are sure he will thank us for saying that even in a simple ballad, it is better to avoid such fifths as occur between the bass and the treble, in passing from the last bar of page 2 to the first bar of page 3. The Sydney papers have already apprised us of the success of the Cantata from which this song is taken; and although the slight specimen of the work which has reached us cannot, as we have said, enable us to know whether this success is deserved, we may hope that something has been done towards proving that composers, as well as teachers, are gradually asserting their power in our Colonies.

HIME, BEALE AND CO., MANCHESTER.

The Beautiful Day. Song. Poetry by Charles Swain. Composed by E. Hime.

A MELODY of an extremely popular character, simple enough in the harmonies and easy enough in the accompaniment to satisfy the amateurs for whom it is evidently designed.